

conflict that you did not ask for and that he could have prevented. Every time he has summoned Serbia's history as a justification for such action, he has imperiled your future. Hopefully, he will realize that his present course is unsustainable; ultimately, it is self-destructive.

The sooner we find a peaceful resolution of this dispute, preserving Kosovo within Serbia while guaranteeing the rights of its people under your law, the sooner Serbia can join the rest of Europe and build a nation that gives all its citizens a voice and a chance at prosperity.

The NATO nations have tried to avert this conflict through every means we knew to be available. Each of us has ties to Serbia. Each respects the dignity and the courage of the Serb people. In the end we decided that the dangers of acting are outweighed by the dangers of allowing this conflict to continue, to worsen, to claim the lives of more innocent civilians, including children, to result in tens of thousands of more homeless refugees.

Now all of us—Americans, Europeans, Serbs, Kosovars—must join together to stop driving wedges between people simply because they belong to different ethnic groups and to start accepting that our differences are less important than our common humanity and our common aspirations.

I call on all Serbs and all people of goodwill to join with us in seeking an end to this needless and avoidable conflict. Instead, let us work together to restore Serbia to its rightful place as a great nation of Europe; included, not isolated, by the world community; respected by all nations for having the strength to build peace.

NOTE: The address was videotaped at approximately 7:30 p.m. in the Roosevelt Room for later broadcast on the United States Information Agency Worldnet. In his remarks, he referred to President Slobodan Milosevic of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro). A tape was not available for verification of the content of this address.

### **Statement on Congressional Action on the Republican Budget Proposal March 25, 1999**

The budget that congressional Republicans passed today is a series of missed opportunities. It fails to lock in debt reduction, fails to extend the solvency of Social Security and Medicare, and fails to protect key investments for the American people—from Head Start to clean water and law enforcement. While this budget marks a reversal from last year's failed effort by Republicans to drain the entire surplus for a tax cut, it still does not do enough to pay down the debt and strengthen Social Security and Medicare.

This year, we have a unique opportunity to build on our success by passing a fiscally disciplined budget that pays down the debt, strengthens Social Security, shores up Medicare, and protects key investments in our children, the environment, and law enforcement. I am committed to accomplishing these goals to give the American people a budget that prepares for the future.

### **Proclamation 7176—Education and Sharing Day, U.S.A., 1999 March 25, 1999**

*By the President of the United States  
of America*

#### **A Proclamation**

Our Nation was founded at a time of extraordinary change, as the world began to move from an agrarian to an industrial economy. Today, as we approach the 21st century, exciting innovations in science and technology are revolutionizing our society, and once again Americans must adapt to the demands of a new era. Beckoning us with exciting new challenges and far-reaching opportunities, our future depends as never before on our Nation's commitment to excellence in education.

Americans have met the dynamic changes in our society not only through education but also by finding strength in our shared goals